

### Hello from Ian May, New EHFN Chairman

Ian May, a well-respected member of the local farming community, has become the new of the Exmoor Hill Farming Network chairman last month. Ian spent 15 years working in international conservation as a cartographer and information manager before returning to North Devon with his husband in 2013, building a house on the family farm near North Molton, and taking up farming full-time. Ian farms suckler cattle and sheep over 330ac in partnership with his father. He has been involved with the test and trials process for the new Environmental Land Management schemes and both the Sustainable Farming Incentive pilot and 2022 offer, and he is also Regional Manager for the National Sheep Association. I have been an active member of EHFN since its inception and have been impressed with the organisation as it has developed over time under Dave's leadership. I feel honoured to be asked to take a more active role in the Network's future and hope that with the support of Dave, the network team and the other Directors we'll be able to continue providing effective support to the Exmoor farming community. I look forward to meeting with many of you over the forthcoming months at various events.



### Latest News

#### **Exmoor hill farmer awarded The High Sheriff of Somerset's Award for his invaluable contribution to the local farming community.**

Dave Knight, long standing Chairman of the Exmoor Hill Farming Network (EHFN) has stepped down after nearly a decade at the helm. A retirement celebration was arranged at Dunster Show in West Somerset, where over 100 people gathered to show their support and say thank you for his dedication and inclusive leadership. During his tenure, Dave has cultivated an independent farmer led network, providing information, skills and ongoing support for the Exmoor farming community. EHFN supports 375 farming businesses within the Greater Exmoor area and has become one of the UK's most successful farmer networks in the country. It was established in 2014 to improve the viability and sustainability of Exmoor farming businesses. Much to Dave's surprise, Jennifer Duke, High Sheriff of Somerset presented Dave with a High Sheriff's Award for his voluntary contribution and invaluable service to his county. Jennifer Duke, High Sheriff of Somerset 2022 said " Dave has shown unwavering dedication to his local community in spearheading the development of the EHFN and providing a collective voice for Exmoor farmers.



Alongside many other initiatives, Dave and his team have increased access to training on the moor and ensured much needed support for the younger generation. This High Sheriff's Award recognises Dave for his outstanding contribution to the community." On receiving the award, Dave said " I am completely overwhelmed to receive such a prestigious award, I feel very honoured to have been recognised for my time as Chairman. I'm proud of the positive impact the Network has had on so many of our Exmoor farmers and feel extremely privileged to be part of it". Notes to editors: The Exmoor Hill Farming Network (EHFN) was established in early 2014 to improve the viability and sustainability of Exmoor farming businesses through knowledge transfer, peer-group support, training, and co-operation to safeguard upland farming, rural employment and landscape management. EHFN has become the 'go-to hub' for information and contacts, used by a wide variety of land-based businesses, supporting around 375 farming businesses on Exmoor and its surrounding areas. **Pictured:** Jennifer Duke, High Sheriff of Somerset, and Dave Knight

### **Dunster Show Bursary**

Earlier this year, the Network awarded The Dunster Show Society with a £2,000 donation towards their Bursary Programme for 2022. The Show Society have been very supportive of our network programme over the years. With the effects of the pandemic and the financial strain on show activities, we were delighted to support two beneficiaries with bursaries towards their educational needs. Dave Knight presented the awards at Dunster Show to Harriet Andrews from Brompton Regis studying Rural Land Management at Harper Adams University and Jade Ely from Minehead studying Agricultural Management at Cannington College. If anyone has any pictures of the presentation taking place, please get in touch.



### **Lynmouth Raft Race**



8 members of our Next Generation Group braved the sea in Lynmouth for their annual raft race this weekend using the theme Crocodile Dunsea and returned in **2<sup>nd</sup> Place**.



Many thanks to Captain Kieran Ash, Jack Griffin, Oliver Dascombe, Mark Williams, Hugo Cox, Emily Martin, Jade Ely and Matthew Williams. A great team building opportunity!

### **Latest from Animal Health and Plant Agency**

An Avian Influenza Prevention Zone has come into force across Devon, Cornwall and parts of Somerset as of 12pm on 31 August. It is a legal requirement for all bird keepers to follow strict biosecurity measures to protect their birds from. See full details: [Avian influenza prevention zone declared in south-west England - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/avian-influenza-prevention-zone-declared-in-south-west-england)

## Open Events



NFU Mutual



### **Farm Protection & Safety Event (attached)**

**Date:** Friday 9th September 2022 **Time:** Light lunch from 1pm, starting prompt at 1.30pm – 4.30pm

**Location:** Cutcombe Market, TA24 7DT by kind permission of Exmoor Farmers.

We are delighted to announce further details of the Farm Protection & Safety Event. Join us for an afternoon of informative workshops focused on protecting yourselves from farm related accidents on your farm and protecting your property from rural crime. We will be joined by experts from NFU and NFU Mutual discussing how to mitigate risks and provide useful reminders of top tips to keep us safe. Supported by Masons Kings, Bridgmans, Exmoor National Park Authority, Avon and Somerset Constabulary and Ark Atv's. A certificate of attendance will arranged.



### **Peer Support Groups**

#### **Next Generation Group**

#### **Farm Visit - TONIGHT**

**Topic:** Beef and Sheep Hill Farm Visit **Date:** Thursday 1st September 2022 **Time:** 6.45pm prompt – 9.30pm approx. **Venue:** Oareford Farm, Oare, Lynton Devon EX35 6NX by kind permission of the Woollacott Family.

Jono has kindly agreed to host at last minute next week. Join us for an informative farm tour at Oareford Farm nestled in the Doone Valley. The traditional beef and sheep hill farm consists of Hereford x Friesian, Limo x and an Aberdeen Angus suckler herd, selling their

offspring during the Autumn sales at Cutcombe with a flock of Cheviot x and Suffolk x ewes, lambing in April. The farm benefits from moorland grazing on Brendon Common. We will jump into 4wd vehicles for the visit and finish up with refreshments in the shed. If you would like to book a place please contact Katherine [katherine@ehfn.org.uk](mailto:katherine@ehfn.org.uk)

### **Forward Farming Group**

#### **Farm visit to a traditional hill farm**

**Date:** Thursday 8th September 2022 **Time:** 5.45pm for 6pm prompt due to loss of light – 9.30pm approx. **Venue:** Worth Farm, Withypool TA24 7RQ by kind permission of Mr Alan Collins and Mrs Ann May. **Peer Support Contribution:** £5pp or annual membership £50.00. Alan and May Collins moved to Worth Farm, Withypool over 50 years ago. In recent years, Alan is farming in partnership with his daughter Anne where they run two main beef and sheep enterprises with grazing rights on Withypool common. They run a suckler herd of cattle mainly Angus x Friesian and Hereford x cattle running with Charolais bulls and two flocks of Exmoor Horns and Scottish Blackface sheep. Join us to hear about their experiences of farming over the years and their hopes for the future of Exmoor hill farming. We will jump into 4WD vehicles for the farm tour and finish up in the sheep shed for tea, coffee and cake. Booking essential for catering purposes by Monday 5th September.

### **Exmoor Women in Farming Group**

#### **Women in Farming Group – September Meeting**

**Topic:** Policing in the rural community **Date:** Monday 19th September 2022 **Time:** 7pm – 9.30pm approx.

**Venue:** Exford Social Club, Exford TA24 7PP **Peer support group contribution** £5pp Join local PCSO Michelle Haines - Michelle has replaced Bryan Stevens who retired recently. She is new to Exmoor but has worked for the Police in different roles for over 30 years. She previously been a PCSO on both a rural beat in South Somerset and worked with a multi-agency team in Yeovil where she ran a domestic violence weekly drop in. She is really enjoying the move to Exmoor and has found the community very welcoming. Topics to be covered will be farm theft, scams, personal safety, domestic violence, and any additional matters members wish to raise (either on the night or privately before the event). Tea, coffee and cake provided, booking is essential by Friday 16th September [admin@ehfn.co.uk](mailto:admin@ehfn.co.uk).

### **Training Opportunities**

#### **Mastering Medicines – *two places remaining***

As of 1st November 2021, Red Tractor has introduced a new compulsory standard, where at least one member of staff has undertaken a Mastering Medicines training course and holds a certificate of competence. We are taking bookings for a September date due to popular demand if this of interest please get in touch with us. **Date:** Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> September 2022 **Venue:** Cutcombe Market **Time:** 1pm for 1.15am start– 4pm. To book your place, please contact Katherine [katherine@ehfn.org.uk](mailto:katherine@ehfn.org.uk)

#### **Emergency at Work First Aid ( one day course)**

**Date:** Tuesday 27th September 2022 **Venue:** Brendon Village Hall **Time:** 9pm -4.30pm **Cost:** £55pp  
Please register your interest for further information.

### **City and Guilds NPTC PA Qualifications -SAFE USE OF PESTICIDES**

**PA1 Date:** Sept/Oct 2022 **Venue:** Cutcombe Market Canteen **Time:** 9.15am -4pm  
We are coordinating the delivery of training on Exmoor for the City and Guilds courses: PA1 (Mandatory)- Foundation Course for all sprayer operators in safe use of pesticides;  
**PA2** Foundation Course for Ground Crop Sprayers Mounted or Trailed training, on farm with tractor and sprayer and **PA6** - Hand Held Applicator (date tbc and venue tbc). Please register your interest.

## Other Interest



**Autumn sales begin this month**

**Monday 5<sup>th</sup> September**

**4374 sheep at Blackmoor Gate**

**Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> September 440 head of cattle at Cutcombe Market**

[Catalogues \(exmoorfarmers.co.uk\)](http://exmoorfarmers.co.uk)

**Friday 16<sup>th</sup> September SALE OF A FULL RANGE OF FARM**

**MACHINERY PLUS 725 SHEEP** at Court Place Farm, Porlock, Minehead, Somerset TA24 8NR [Farm Sales \(exmoorfarmers.co.uk\)](http://exmoorfarmers.co.uk)



**Grasswell ( view events page)**

**PROFITABLE & RESILIENT FARMING - TECHNICAL FARM WALK**

**Date:** Thursday 22nd September 2022 **Venue:** Higher Thornton Farm, Exeter

Chris and Sarah Berry are tenant farmers managing 450 acres with breeding ewe and suckler beef enterprises. Over the last 5 years they have implemented changes to improve their

resilience to extreme weather events and reduce their reliance on purchased fertiliser and feed. This has enabled them to increase profit whilst improving lifestyle and enhancing their environment, an achievement which was recognised by them winning Devon Farmer of the Year. This event aims to explain and demonstrate the core principles Chris and Sarah have implemented including; Grazing Management, Plant Diversity and Business Management. It will bring together the people and businesses who have supported them alongside other inspiring farmers from the Southwest. Tickets are £20pp and must be purchased before the event. Book here <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/higher-thornton-farm-walk-tickets-400611368387?aff=All>



**Free Soil Sampling Service**

Through the Upstream Thinking project FWAG SouthWest are offering free soil testing to farmers in the **Headwaters of the Exe** area for the below parameters

- pH,
- Phosphorus (P),
- Potassium (K),
- Magnesium (Mg), and
- Organic Matter

We can offer up to **5 free samples per holding**.

There is the option for FWAG to take the samples for you or we can send/drop off sampling kits to you.

If interested in getting soil samples taken or require more information, please contact us below:

**Joanna Uglow** (Senior Farm Environment Advisor FWAG SW) on [Joanna.Uglow@fwagsw.org.uk](mailto:Joanna.Uglow@fwagsw.org.uk) / 07377 516 301

**Aine Corrigan** (Assistant Farm Environment Advisor FWAG SW) on [Aine.Corrigan@fwagsw.org.uk](mailto:Aine.Corrigan@fwagsw.org.uk) / 07557094029

EHFN point of contact: Katherine Williams 07970 795808 or email [katherine@ehfn.org.uk](mailto:katherine@ehfn.org.uk)



**Exmoor Rural  
Health Hub**

The Health Hub will be operating from The Moorland Hall, Wheddon Cross on the following date: **Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> September - 11 am - 4 pm**. No booking necessary. For further information please visit [Dates for your diary – Exmoor Rural Health Hub \(erhh.co.uk\)](http://erhh.co.uk)

## **Commercial Adverts**

### **NEW\* Seeking new farming opportunity**

Established and experienced local sheep farming couple with 500 sheep, require new farming opportunity within Greater Exmoor area due to relinquish of current tenancy this Autumn. All options considered , short or long term. References available on request. In the first instance, please contact Katherine at EHFN on 07970 795808 or [katherine@ehfn.org.uk](mailto:katherine@ehfn.org.uk)

### **Part time farm worker required.**

One or two days a week, Cattle and sheep handling , some quad and tractor work, some experience preferred.

Contact Andrew Schofield on 07980711352 or [andrewschofield2@gmail.com](mailto:andrewschofield2@gmail.com) Wheddon Cross.

### **Grazing and stables/barn/shelter wanted for horses.**

Long term preferable but will consider short term arrangements. Ideally sole use but would consider a smaller livery yard. More than happy to maintain and carry out work if/as required. 30 mins any side of Minehead considered. The option to graze sheep alongside would be beneficial but by no means a necessity.

Please contact Sarah on [sarah.rawle@btinternet.com](mailto:sarah.rawle@btinternet.com) or 07436846110

**To book on any of the above events please contact Kirsty [admin@ehfn.org.uk](mailto:admin@ehfn.org.uk) or 01643 841455.**

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